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JUNIATA COLLEGE BULLETIN

Vol. XII

SEPTEMBER, 1915

No. 3 A



COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS
BY
HONORABLE MARTIN G. BRUMBAUGH
GOVERNOR OF PENNSYLVANIA



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HONORABLE MARTIN G. BRUMBAUGH

GOVERNOR OF PENNSYLVANIA

JUNE 17, 1915



It is an unusual pleasure for me to be here today. It is not the first Commencement which I have attended at Juniata. I have had the privilege in the past of sitting with the undergraduates and seeing the class graduate. Once I made a speech when I was graduated that nobody knows anything about, fortunately for them. I also had the privilege later on of helping to prepare a graduating class for its part on an occasion like this. And still later I had the privilege of conferring the degrees and handing the diplomas to some of those of you who sit here this morning, graduates of Juniata. I have worked here, I have played; and here in an institution founded in a large way by the people of my own family and entirely by the people of my own faith, you can understand with what deep feelings I return to you this morning, for I love the old school quite as much as I ever did in the past.

The problem facing us now is, what can we say to these young men and women as they are about to sever

their student life and go out to find their place and do their work side by side with many others in life. You have often heard it said, that one's happiest days are his school days, that never again, no matter how long you live or what success may come to you, there never will return to you, so they say, days so deep with joy as the days you spent in school. It is a pleasing thought, and many people regard it as true; and yet, if you may take the word of experience and the testimony of those who have lived, such, after all, is not the case. In fact it ought not to be the case, because when you are a student in a college or a child in a home you do not know the depth of real joy in life because your life is ordered and directed and controlled by others. It is not until you have lived to take your own place in life, work out your own problems and achieve your own success, that you begin to taste at the fountains of real joy and abiding happiness.

Up to now, this graduating class has been guided and helped by others. Their parents in the home, their neighbors in the communities where they have lived, the faculty of the college where they have been educated, these have thought, these have wrought for them. Now as they are graduated, they must go out and begin to work for others, and that is quite a different problem. It is one thing to have the world work for you, it is another thing to work for the world; and leaving your school, you take on not only the responsibilities of nature and earnest life, but you take on also the joys and the satisfactions that come only to those who have the courage to do the right, and who steadfastly through the years pursue it in the performance of whatever duty may fall to their lot. So I should like to impress upon you that the real joy of this world is the joy that comes from service rendered to others and not from receiving service

from others; that you will never know what it really means to live until you have learned how to live for others and for the world at large.

When I was a boy a good many years ago in the little school at Marklesburg, on the front page of my Geography was a picture. To my boy eyes it was a wonderful thing. There was a turtle, and on the turtle a man, and on the man the world. It was Atlas, carrying on his shoulders the whole world. It was emblematic of the fact that the book which carried his portrait on its title page was a book that gave to my mind and the mind of anyone who looked at it, a knowledge of that world held up by the strong, steady sinews of the great mythical Atlas. It was more, now that I look at the picture again, than a mere advertisement of a Geography. It was typical of life for you and for me; for all of us, in one way or another, must carry our own world on our own shoulders if we are to be worthy of the place that we occupy in society, in the State, in the Nation. The important thing is not that you should uphold the physical universe. You do not have to do that. Atlas never did. He wasn't called for that purpose. The universe, this physical world which he was supposed to carry, keeps itself. It long ago learned, when it swept out of the thought of God, to obey His law and live, and so it has lived.

But you have a world just as real as this physical world upon which you sit, upon which these buildings stand, upon which our roads stretch out to the horizon. The important thing for the graduate, for the man or the woman living today, is that we should pick first of all a good world to uphold, and then with secure foundations, more secure than the back of a tortoise, stand and uphold our world through the days and the years of our lives. I do not know, I doubt whether these capped

and gowned potential units of society know, just what world will nestle down and rest upon their shoulders; but I know this, that they like you, in a large measure can choose the quality of life they will uphold and the kind of a world they will support. It is important that you should lend your strength, your physical, your mental, your spiritual strength to a great and splendid service, and not to an unworthy one.

So many of us waste our chance, lose our opportunities, destroy our effectiveness because we give ourselves to things that are not worthy of us. We pay too dear for many of the things that we buy in the markets of the world. I have a dog at home, and one of his chief occupations is to chase his tail in a circle. He doesn't get anywhere. It is a useless kind of thing, and we wouldn't permit it, excepting that because the dog is a useless appendage of the family it is a part of him to do that. Now what I want to impress particularly upon this graduating class is the fact that it is important early in life to choose a definite thing to do and then direct the energies of your life to the accomplishment of that thing. Stand under your world resolutely, steadfastly, securely, so that when you have lived your life it may be said of you, that you have lived it to a purpose and not uselessly. We begin to understand that in God's economy nothing is wasted, and that the things which we throw aside as waste and which we discard as useless become in the course of years and centuries the very materials out of which society weaves its strength and its life. Nothing is wasted, nothing is useless, nothing is lost to the world. We begin to understand that some of us inconsiderately throw away our lives in useless, idle, purposeless, meaningless ways.

The other day I received the catalogue of the graduates of this college, and because I knew my name would

appear somewhere in the list, I was naturally interested in looking it over, and I found it. I found many others there that I knew nearly as well as I knew my own. To me the remarkable thing was to read the names and see what these different boys and girls of my early years were doing, what world they were shouldering, how they were carrying themselves, the quality of service they were rendering, the kind of life they were living, the standards they had set and formed and fixed in their souls and striven to achieve. Then I saw and read the list, and saw on the whole what a fine record the graduates of this good little college have made in this world of ours, and I saw in that record inspiration and help and strength for you who are about to join the ranks.

I suppose if there is any one thing that we admire in an individual more than another thing, it is the power to do things, the power of achievement, the quality which sums itself up in the phrase, "He gets there." You have heard it. You have taken your hat off to it. The farmer who produces a satisfactory crop is the farmer whom you respect. The teacher who trains his pupils in the best way is the best teacher, and the training which he gives is the result of his power as a teacher. Somehow we are all reaching out for the power to do things. That is why we go to school. That is why we study the mathematics and the languages and the sciences and history and all the other things that fall within the scope of a curriculum of training. It is through these that we may take unto ourselves the power to do effective service in the world. Now if you want that power, if you want it really, if you want it more than you want any other thing, you can get it if you are willing to pay the price for it. It doesn't come to you in your stocking on Christmas night. It isn't given to you by those who love you, on your anniversary day. It is brought to you by

new knowledge, given to you by new power. It is wrought out in your own soul by your own efforts. It is the thing that you make yourself to be that you are in the last analysis, so that it is a truism that you actually carry your own destiny in the hollow of your own hand. You can do things if you want to do things. You will not do things if you expect others to make it easy for you to get things done. A lazy man, a really lazy man, a man who is too lazy to move and who grunts when he must, is of little account on earth. An intellectually lazy man or woman who has not the enterprise or ambition or definiteness of purpose or continuity of purpose, is just about as useless in the world as a fifth wheel to a wagon. It is your enterprise, it is your toil, it is your work, it is your business that develops through the years the power that you need if you are to work effectively in life. Now to help you to that, there are a few things that could be said on an occasion like this.

In the first place, there is a great power comes to an individual when he makes up his mind to do one thing and stick to that thing through life. There is power in a great purpose set up before you and lived to every day of your life. In the early 40's of the last century a young man aspired to a seat in the Legislature of the State of Illinois. He knew few of his constituents and fellow citizens, and in order to introduce himself to them, he prepared a little broadside which I have seen. It is not as large as this program of exercises that you hold in your hand. Upon that he had printed what we now call in political life his platform, the things he stood for, the things he would work for, the things he believed in. He distributed them among the voters, and by one of those strange accidents of public life, people believed in what he said and elected him to the Legislature. In that little broadside he said, among other things: "I

have been deprived through no fault of my own, the blessings of a liberal education, but I have always regarded it as one of the choicest possessions of a man, and if elected to the office to which I aspire and opportunity arises, I shall unhesitatingly and unalterably support everything that makes for the better education of the people." Those were the words of Abraham Lincoln when he first stepped into public life in Illinois. Twenty years after that, in 1862, as President of the United States, the chance came to fulfill that purpose of his early youth when the Morrill Land Grant Act was passed, establishing agricultural colleges throughout this nation. And when Lincoln signed the Land Grant Act, next to the Emancipation Proclamation, he wrote the largest document of freedom that has ever been issued in America, for in these colleges that he thus created were liberated the minds of our young men and women throughout all the years and centuries that are to come; and perhaps when your grandchildren gather here, they will testify to what I now prophesy, that in the last analysis and in the wide reaches of national progress and power, that act meant a larger advance to the human race even than the Emancipation Proclamation. It was the power of a purpose set aright in his young heart and achieved in his mature years.

I have told you before, and I want to tell you again, that over in the mountains of Switzerland, after the bloody Spanish Wars and the ruthless invasions and persecutions of Alva, when canton after canton was robbed of its men, leaving armies of widows and orphan children, a pious minister of the Gospel visiting among his parishioners day after day was accompanied by his little grandson Henry. One day when he had been in a number of homes of unusual distress and suffering, they started late in the evening back to the parsonage, and

the little boy holding the hand of his grandfather said, "Grandfather, when I become a man I shall take the side of the poor," and when he became a man he took the side of the poor. He was then at Neuhof, and later on at Stanz, and later still at Yverdun and later still at Burgdorf. Living with the orphans of grand children that he had visited as a boy, he sat up at night and patched their torn and tattered garments while they slept. He cooked the simple meal that these orphans ate. It was said of him that he lived like a beggar that he might train beggars to live like men. And when you walk the streets of Switzerland's proudest city, its finest monument is to the boy that took the side of the poor and carried that purpose through his life, Heinrich Pestalozzi, the great educator.

There is also power in your preparation for service in life. There are some who go through school and college with one thought in mind, "How can I put it over the professor and skim through with the least amount of effort to myself," whose sole ambition seems to be just to graduate to please somebody else, but who never knew in all their college career one earnest day's solid application to the books and to the lessons of the day. On the other hand, those who take their lessons seriously and who day after day do the largest service which the day presents to them to do, come at last through the long preparation of years of earnestness to the possession of a power that makes them leaders of men. I want to commend to you the importance of long, earnest, steady preparation before you get into the work of life to fight its battles, to win its victories and to receive its rewards. Do not think that because you have lived in a boarding school for two or three or four years and have studied a little Latin and less Greek that you seem fair to win the successes of life. You

have only been started in the preparation for that service, and the wise student never forgets the old Greek ideal, "A learner once, a learner always." Never lose sight of the fine discipline of the Greek mind ideally portrayed in Plato's Republic, where he points out that it takes sixty years to study to be a sage, and that the business of the State is to breed a sage. For when once you have made a sage you have made a leader and counsellor and guide for society. And he was wise enough, pondering in the streets of Athens to see that it took time, long time, earnest time, persevering preparation, to put one's self in the possession of commanding influence and power. So I want to commend to you the fact that when you close your class books, you have not closed the books that you must study if you are ever to win the great victories of life. A student once, a student always.

Then there is a power in one's personality. You do not only get your power from having a purpose, and preparation to achieve that purpose, but you get a certain power from the way you yourself behave under the circumstances. I need not recite to you the story well known to every reader of our American literature, the Stone Face in the valley in the White Mountains. But I do want to say to you, and I want to say to you earnestly, that the quality which you yourself bring to your purpose and to your preparation for your work has quite as much to do with your success as any other one element entering into the problem. If you are grouchy and sour and morose and sordid and mean, and if your own spirit is selfish and narrow and bigoted, you will never be large enough to fill the place of the great soul of God and of the world. So I ask you who are going out from the college, think about yourself and try to learn this important lesson which I believe is the hard-

est lesson that comes to any of us, that when we fail, the fault is with ourselves and not with others. I know a thousand men who would be President of the United States today if it were not for somebody else interfering with them. They blame it on the other fellow, and I have even known some base enough to blame it upon their own parents, and say they hadn't a chance. "Dad was against me, and mother didn't care." The fact of the matter is, Shakespeare understood it quite as well as you do: "The fault, dear Brutus, lies not within others but in ourselves that we are underlings." It was Addison who said: "'Tis not in mortals to command success, but we'll do more, Sempronius, we'll deserve it." And I find as I meander among other folks that you get from others substantially what you give to others, that if you want the large compensation of life to come, you must put the personal element of grace and courtesy into your life. Here is a test of a gentleman which is simple enough for even the kindergartner to understand. What do you mean by a gentleman? You say of a certain man, "He is a gentleman." What do you mean by that? You mean the kind of coats he wears, the sort of uniform he puts on, you mean the amount of schooling he has had, the number of acres he owns? Do you mean these extraneous and external things? Not at all. A gentleman is one whom you are glad to greet, and for whom you are the better when he goes, who has brought forth to you gladness and given to you gifts of help. If he cannot do that, he is not a gentleman; so that Rosenkranz is right when in his analysis of Hegelian morality he points out that the first quality of a sincere moral life is courtesy, kindness of heart, warmth of feeling for others, the quality that shows itself all through the centuries in the Rock of Ages from the dawn of our new civilization, "Peace on earth, good

will among men," for good will is willing good to others. It is only when your spirit is rich enough and fine enough and strong enough to wish well to others, that others will make your life rich and worth while.

There is another quality that I wish to commend to you this morning, the quality of dependableness, reliability, the quality that makes people say of you, "That man will stay put." That is but the "flowering out," in the phrase of the street, of the quality of power in purpose in your own soul. Can you be trusted, relied upon, are you worth a hundred per cent. in the market of the human will? That is the question, dependableness; be steady. It was said of the good old Dunker people who lived down in Montgomery county, down in General Stewart's home country, in colonial days, that their word was as good as their bond. That is the kind of men we want today all over this country, who when they say a thing, mean that thing and not some other thing instead of it, who are concerned not to form phrases in which to deceive but to express in simple language the earnest, complete, honest conviction of their souls. You are neither morally nor intellectually honest if you use the training of your college to deceive your fellowmen. It is a power which is in your hands to use as you will.

Finally, this thing. If you want to achieve the crowning virtue of a good life, incorporate in your soul the virtue of humility which in its last analysis is the confession of your own conscience that you do not know all, and that if you follow the guidance of your own judgment you will err, that if you follow the guidance and conscience of other men, they like you will err, and you will walk in devious ways; that in the last analysis you must come to understand that human judgment is fallible, and therefore you must trust the leading of your

life to a judgment that is infallible, which is the judgment of Almighty God, our common Father; and when we have sensed our own limitations and confess His own omnipotence, then we add to our souls the virtue of religion which is humility. You will never work with great power if you are not humble, and you will never be sincerely humble unless you are a devout believer in the omnipotence of Almighty God. So I commend to you in the last analysis this fact, that you cannot live to the highest and best in society, you cannot do the large things for your kind, you cannot touch in a big way the work of your country if you are not an humble believer in the religion of your fathers. Furthermore, in our civilization, it lies inherent in the constitution of our country, it is wrought in the very fabric of your Commonwealth, it lies in the hearts of all law abiding citizens, —go to God. Never lose sight of that if you want to live as you should live in this world. It reminds me of that fine old legend carved deep in the granite over the now ruined gates of Busyram: “In the midst of the light is the beautiful, in the midst of the beautiful is the good, in the midst of the good is God, the Eternal One.” And through all your quest for beauty through art, and light through science and goodness through ethics, remember that the heart of all true learning is God, the Eternal One.





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